

Olga Nethersole's Play Attacks Famous Church

"The Writing on the Wall" a Daring Innovation in Drama -- Bernstein Aims to Succeed the Late Victorien Sardou as Leading French Playwright

[From Our New York Dramatic Correspondent.]

THE WRITING ON THE WALL, the new drama in which Olga Nethersole is appearing on tour, is creating a sensation of no small proportions owing to the startling attack which it makes on Trinity church of New York city. Trinity is the wealthiest church in the country, if not in the world. It has been subjected to attack of late in magazines and newspapers owing to the condition of much of the property the corporation owns in New York city.

Miss Nethersole's play professes to reveal the inside workings of the great religious corporation and to demonstrate that it willfully violates the laws of the state, of decency and of morality. Naturally a bitter and widespread discussion has arisen and seems to be gaining considerable impetus.

When Miss Nethersole brings the play to New York city it is certain that the discussion will rise to its climax, and it is currently reported that the Trinity authorities will seek to have the play suppressed as wantonly libelous, and the church will apply to the mayor and the police commissioner to that end.

Congressmen Saw the Play.

"The Writing on the Wall" was originally produced in Washington at the Columbia theater, where many members of congress went to witness it, but they refused to give opinions on it. William J. Hurlbut is the author of this striking play, and he says that it was written before the recent criticism of the church in the public prints was begun. So far as Miss Nethersole is concerned, she says the play is the first of a series illustrating phases of American life that she intends to produce.

The play shows that Trinity, in addition to its own church, controls ten other churches and sixteen schools and real property listed at a value of many millions.

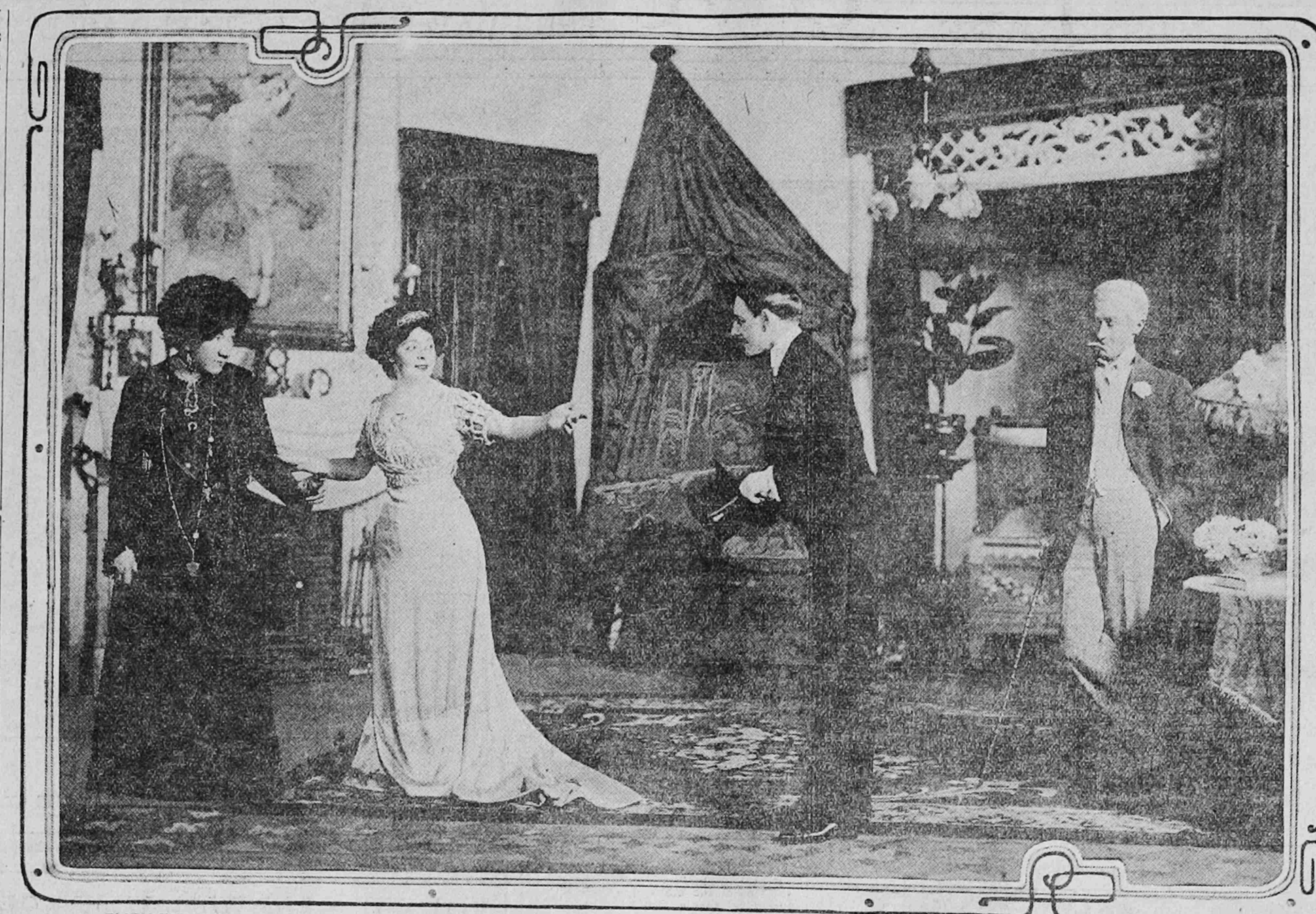
Church as a Landlord.

The corporation is attacked as a landlord of tenement houses from which it rolls up the greater part of its income of \$750,000 a year. Hurlbut assails the corporation on the ground that it does not live up to the teachings of the church in keeping its tenants in tumbledown, dark, dirty frame buildings.

Miss Nethersole plays the part of a wealthy woman who goes into the tenement district to do charitable work. She is amazed to find that Trinity is the landlord. She is the wife of a Trinity vestryman, and before the play runs to a close she works reform in the corporation. An excellent company, including Robert T. Haines, William Morris and Beverly Sigsbee, gives Miss Nethersole good support.

There are four acts in the play and twelve characters. An unusual fact is that three acts take place on the same afternoon.

Both Miss Nethersole and the au-



ELIZABETH ARIANS.

MABEL BARRISON, THE STAR.

ALFRED HICKMAN.

JOHN EMERSON.

A POPULAR SCENE IN "THE BLUE MOUSE," SUCCESSFUL COMEDY AT LYRIC THEATER, NEW YORK.

thor assert that they have no intent to attack religion in any sense in this play. On the contrary, they believe the best aims of religion will be served by making the Trinity corporation reform and not lay the cause of religion open to criticism by the many who habitually seek opportunities to attack whatever represents the higher life of the nation.

Henry Bernstein is working as hard to fill the boots of the late Victorien Sardou as E. H. Sothern is to become heir to the position occupied in the past on the American stage by the late Richard Mansfield. And Mr. Bernstein has a vastly better chance to succeed in his ambition than has Mr. Sothern.

Just now Mr. Bernstein is very

much to the fore as a playwright who not only dares to dip beneath the surface of our seemingly conventional life, but who has the ability to do it acceptably. In "The Thief" and "Samson" he showed evidences of Sardou's realistic touch, and, like Sardou, he has unhesitatingly adopted melodrama as his own.

His new play, "Israel," is described

as certain to meet wide approval, and in the new play he is writing for William Gillette he hopes to strike the keynote of certain existing social conditions.

Perhaps Mr. Bernstein is aware that too strenuous endeavor to become a second Sardou may result to his own detriment. Sardou toward the end of his career as the leading French play-

wright lived chiefly on the reputation he made years before, and that reputation was made at a time when the standards of excellence were not so lofty as today.

Sardou, were he beginning his career today instead of reposing peacefully in his grave, would have far less chance for equaling the prominence he attained. His methods were, for

the most part, of the old school, which made melodrama almost an essential in every serious drama.

Sardou even went further and descended from melodrama to stardom on various occasions. Stage productions must necessarily show artificiality to meet the limitations of space and time, but he who artistically disguises these artificialities will more rapidly build a profitable reputation.

And, after all, nowadays the chief office of reputation in every walk of life is to increase the market value of an individual.

A Third "Blue Mouse" Company.

Now that the original "Blue Mouse" company is playing to capacity business at the Lyric theater and the second "Blue Mouse" company is organized and ready to open the Messrs. Shubert announce the formation of yet a third organization to present this latest Clyde Fitch success on tour. The three leading roles in this third company, already in rehearsal, will be played by Millicent Evans, Geoffrey Stein and Wilton Taylor.

G. P. Huntley's Career.

G. P. Huntley, star in "Kitty Grey," the new English play now in New York at the New Amsterdam theater, was born in Fermoy, County Cork, Ireland. He comes of a theatrical family, his mother, father, grandmother and grandfather having preceded him in the profession.

The name of G. P. Huntley is a familiar one in the racing world of England, where the actor is the possessor of many race horses. Mr. Huntley's record on the turf was an exceptional one at the start, as he won eleven races out of fourteen. Two days before Mr. Huntley sailed for America he won a race. His stable includes both flat racers and steeplechase horses. Mr. Huntley is in partnership with one of the cleverest trainers in England, Mr. John F. Hallick. As a horse breeder the actor's colors are claret and apple green sleeves and claret cap. He admits that he selected claret and apple green because he thought it was "a combination calculated to give the bookmakers a pain in their Little Mince."

An Admirer of the American Indian.

Mr. Huntley first visited America when he was about fifteen, not theatrically, but in search of the romantic, being an ardent admirer of the north-west American Indian. While in the west he visited many reservations and made a very fine collection of Indian trophies which adorn his walls in his home in England. Mr. Huntley has also painted many of the chiefs, such as Red Cloud, John Grass and others of the Sioux Nation.

Mr. Huntley first visited America

as an actor with the Kendalls, with whom he played for four American tours, visiting most of the principal cities of the United States.

Frederick Tringello

Johnson to Fight Langford--New Record For Pacers on Ice; Demarest After Hoppe--Chicago Ball Players to Quit

WHILE Jim Jeffries, the retired heavyweight champion, is loosening up his muscles in exhibition bouts with Sam Berger and the followers of pugilism are anxiously awaiting a definite answer as to whether he intends to re-enter the prize ring or not Jack Johnson has agreed to give Sam Langford, the colored heavyweight of Boston, a crack at the championship. The pair are scheduled to fight before the members of the National Sporting club of London on the Queen's birthday, May 24 next. Langford, while considerably smaller than Johnson, is a great fighter and will surely put up a better battle than Tommy Burns did, but he can hardly be expected to win.

It will be the first time in the history of the prize ring that two colored men have fought for the world's championship. Two other American colored fighters—Joe Jeanette, who has the credit of a decision over Johnson on a foul, and Sam McVey, with whom Johnson battled repeatedly in his early days in the ring—are now abroad awaiting Jack's coming, and both will clamor for a fight.

McVey has been located at Paris for a year or two and is the present champion of France, in which boxing is something new. Johnson, McVey, Langford and Jeanette constitute an all black fighting quartet that is pretty hard to beat, and they may be expected to play battledore and shuttlecock with the world's championship title

among themselves before giving any white man who appears at all dangerous a chance to win it back. Sam Fitzpatrick, the new champion fighter, will not forget in a hurry how long he had to wait before getting a match for Johnson, and now that he is in a position to dictate he will have something to say in picking opponents. Eventually, however, Johnson must fight the best man that can be procured, and that man is pretty sure to be James J. Jeffries, the retired, unbeaten white champion.

Ketchel and Kaufman.

There is no other white boxer now in sight who seems likely to develop sufficiently to win back the title from the negro. Stanley Ketchel, the midweight champion, who is taking things easy in order to take on weight so he can enter the heavyweight class, is the most promising, but he lacks boxing skill as well as the required weight to tackle a fighter of the Johnson stamp. Stanley is a rugged fighter and has a punch that makes him always dangerous, but he is not a master of the art of self defense. It would take several years of careful training and much experience to make a champion fighter of Ketchel. If he is sincere in his desire to become the champion he will place himself in the hands of some one capable of developing him.

Al Kaufmann, the California heavyweight, has the size and weight and is in the hands of the man who brought out Jeffries, but Billy Delaney finds a different sort of pupil than Jeff was—stouter to grasp the possibilities of the hit-and-get-away game and more likely to go up into the air under fire.

Chicago Stars to Quit?

Is that great baseball machine, the Chicago Nationals, to be broken up next season? With Johnny Evers, the Cubs' star second sacker, likely to stay out of the game for the entire season; Manager Chance dissatisfied with the money consideration, Shortstop Tinker unwilling to let baseball interfere with his theatrical tour, Mordred Brown talking of taking a season off; Johnny Kling, the Cubs' stellar backstop, thinking there is more money in the pool and billiard business than there is in baseball; the world's champions are likely to present a rather crippled appearance next spring.

In last year's pennant race the Cubs had but little to spare. Both the New

York and Pittsburg teams have been greatly strengthened the past winter, especially New York, and should the Cubs get a bad start next spring because of the absence of several of their stars the pennant is almost sure to be lost to them.

Chance Wants More Money.

It is very evident that Frank Chance will insist upon a larger compensation than he has received heretofore. President Murphy is responsible for the statement that the Cubs' leader has made more than \$25,000 a season for the last three years. This may or may not be true, but Chance is nevertheless seems to think he is worth more money. The effect of Chance's holdout plan on the other members of the team is plain. If the manager of the world's champions is making \$25,000 a season the other players will also want increases, for ball players refuse to give credit for the team's victory to any one man.

Demarest After Hoppe's Scalp.

Ever since Calvin Demarest, the Chicago billiard expert, joined the professional ranks he has been camping on Willie Hoppe's trail. Demarest does not pretend to believe that he can beat Hoppe just now at the 18.1 game. He does think, however, that he could make it mighty interesting for Willie at 18.1 or 18.2 after a few months more of practice. Hoppe, while a star at either game, is at his best at 18.1. Demarest has never gone very far into the more difficult style, but his play would lead one to believe that if he ever does take it up he will be hard for any one to beat. His style of play is well adapted to 18.1, and his long runs are always marked by his out of balk play.

New Record For Pacers on Ice.

Pacing and trotting races on the ice have been one of the leading sports in Canada and in the colder sections of the United States for many years. The novelty of seeing well bred horses performing with spikes on their shoes attracts many hundreds to the scene of the contests. Recently at Dufferin park, Toronto, the Eel, Frank W. Erickson's great pacer, driven by Dan McEwen, made a new world's record for pacers on ice, and then he was not doing his best. McEwen had his watch in his hand when he started the 2:17 track record of Blackbirds. He drove the Eel carefully, never urging him a portion of the dis-

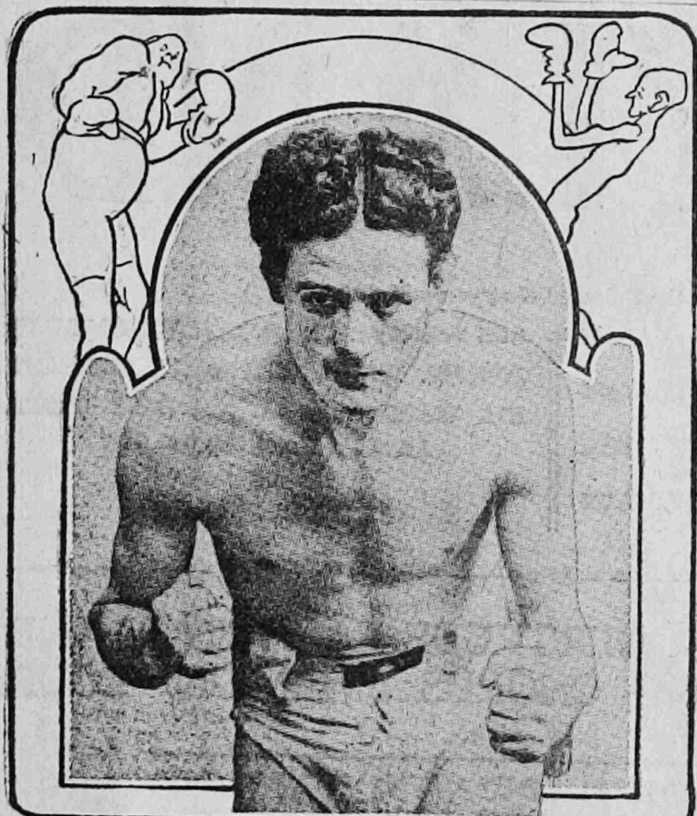
tance, and went to the first quarter in only 34½ seconds, the second quarter being covered in 33½ seconds, the time for the half being 1:07½; the third quarter was told off in 34½ seconds, and the next eighth he stopped in less than 16 seconds. When

Driver McEwen saw that he had the record well in hand he eased up at the end, and the last quarter was paced in 33½ seconds, the full time for the mile being 2:14½.

This is better time than that made by the great Cresceus, 2:15, in his fa-

mous exhibition mile at Ottawa some years ago. It broke the Toronto record and incidentally created a new world's record, made by Miss Syracuse at Plattsburg last winter on ice over a half mile track.

JAMES MILES.



JEM DRISCOLL, ENGLISH FEATHERWEIGHT CHAMPION, WHO HAS REPEATEDLY CHALLENGED ABE ATTELL.

THE PASSING SHOW.

Lillian Russell sold her New York house for \$50,000. Mr. and Mrs. Frank Pixley have started for a trip around the world. Charles Frohman will star Eva Tanguay in a new musical comedy. Billy Clifford and Maud Lambert

will head a company to play "The Girl at the Helm." Arthur Dunn is to be starred by Messrs. Askin and Singer in "Algeria." Edna Wallace Hopper has received an offer to star in Australia. Denman Thompson, the original Un-

cle Josh of "The Old Homestead," will leave after this season. Carlotta Nillon is rehearsing a new play, of which no details have been given out. "Cameo Kirby," in which Nat C. Goodwin began his season, is to be revised and improved. Rachel Crothers, the author of "The

Three of Us," has written a new society drama. William Faversham will remain in New York until next May. Rosalind Coghlan, the daughter of Rosa Coghlan, has been engaged for the east of "The Traveling Salesman." Dorothy Donnelly, who is a Shaw enthusiast and has been giving clever

lectures about this writer, will spend the summer with the English dramatist and his wife at their summer home in Sussex, England. Bertha Kalich denies the report that she is going into vaudeville. Henry E. Harris, the manager who produced "The Chorus Lady," "The Lion and the Mouse" and other suc-

cessful plays, devotes two days a week to reading the plays sent to him. Somehow a report got about that Henry Miller was to retire from the stage in a couple of years. He emphatically denied the report. Grace George is shortly to appear in a new play, "A Woman's Way." Lillian Russell has saved up all the

love letters she ever got and is going to publish them. It is safe to predict a big sale for the book. The Shuberts have extended their operations into Canada, having acquired a theater in Toronto. Seymour Hicks is to appear in a musical version of "The Dictator" in London.



FINISH OF ICE PACING CONTEST AT DUFFERIN PARK, TORONTO.